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DIRECTIVE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA ON THE QUESTION OF INTELLECTUALS

Adopted by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee at its meeting held on February 24, 1956

中共中央关于知識分子問題的指示

（一九五六年二月二十四日中央政治局会議通过）

（英　文）

GENERAL OFFICE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA

中共中央办公厅印

I

With the advent of the high tide of socialist economic and cultural construction in our country, the importance of personnel in science and technology and cultural workers in general becomes more and more obvious. It also becomes more and more obvious that our intellectuals, whether in number or quality, are far from being adequate to meet our country's needs. Such being the case, it is necessary for the Party to take further steps to put the question of intellectuals on the order of the day of the entire Party and various government departments. It is necessary to draw up a comprehensive plan, give more vigorous leadership, overcome shortcomings and correct mistakes in this aspect of our work. It is necessary to adopt a series of effective measures to mobilize as far as possible our existing intellectual force and bring their abilities into full play, continuously raise their political and professional levels, and train new recruits on a large scale to add to their numbers. All this is aimed at changing the backwardness in our science and culture in the shortest time possible and, in particular, enabling those branches of science most urgently needed in our country to approach the most advanced levels of the world within 12 years (i.e. by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan). Thereby we can gradually rely on our own strength to solve the many complicated problems of natural science and technology which crop up in the course of our national construction.

II

The Central Committee of the Party has always attached great importance to the question of intellectuals, both before and since liberation, and has defined and carried out a policy of uniting, educating and remoulding intellectuals. Under the strong impact of the Party's policy and the great reforms and achievements recorded in various fields in the past six years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, they have undergone a fundamental change. The great majority of them now are either progressives who actively support the Communist Party and socialism and are working whole-heartedly for the people, or are intermediate elements who, though politically not active enough, have already taken their stand with the Communist Party and socialism and are able to accomplish tasks assigned them. On the whole, only about 5 per cent are counter-revolutionaries or bad elements, but these have already been isolated; some 10 per cent lack political consciousness or are ideologically reactionary.

The intellectuals have in the main become workers for socialism. Although many of them (including some progressives) still have bourgeois ideas and retain a bourgeois style in work, their relationship with manual workers has changed from opposition to each other, as existed before liberation, into closer contact and co-operation with each other. In the course of their work, they have gradually cultivated a sense of organization and discipline. Their ranks are rapidly increasing; among them are a great number of new recruits trained after liberation, and not a few come from families of working people or have been labourers themselves. The intellectuals have made remarkable progress in their professional skills and many important contributions to our national construction.

Judging from all this, we must realize that the body of the intelligentsia has become part of the working people and that in the course of socialist construction an alliance of workers, peasants and intellectuals has come into existence. The Party's policy of uniting, educating and remoulding intellectuals has thus been proved correct in practice and brought significant results.

Nevertheless, on the question of intellectuals, two erroneous tendencies still exist within the Party. One is sectarianism. In the first place, comrades who have this tendency are more or less prejudiced against the intellectuals. They notice their defects and mistakes but fail to appreciate the change in an overwhelming majority of them, a change in drawing closer to us during the past few years under the circumstances of a new China. As a result, they do not treat them as their own people, take a comradely attitude in working together with them, observe the authority that goes with their posts, or respect their sound opinions.

In the second place, these comrades do not understand that, to build socialism in China, we are in need of modern technique and scientific knowledge, and that to master such technique and knowledge, we must make use of whatever is valuable in the cultural heritage of the bourgeoisie and other sources. The intellectuals we inherited from the old society are in point of fact a most important legacy. Some comrades recognize the significance of modern science and technique, yet they think that so long as the Soviet experts are with us, it does not matter whether we have Chinese experts or not. Or even if we should rely on Chinese experts, we would have to wait for the next generation, thus denying that the Chinese experts as we now have can play an important role. Taking such a crude, arrogant attitude and wrong viewpoint, they fail to realize that we must be good at learning from our own experts, besides learning from the Soviet experts and other foreign

friends. Furthermore, they pay little attention in their work to the question of fully mobilizing intellectuals and bringing their abilities into full play on the one hand, and of training new recruits on the other. This is the main erroneous tendency in the Party at present.

The other erroneous tendency is one of undue compromise and lack of political vigilance. In the first place, comrades who have such a tendency fail to link the task of using the services of intellectuals with that of remoulding them, and to link the task of learning from old intellectuals with that of insisting on political and ideological principles and constantly educating them in the spirit of communism. As it is, they are blind to their ideological, political and professional shortcomings, and trust them without discrimination. Or even if they notice their shortcomings, they do not criticize them and consider it unnecessary to continue with the work of educating and remoulding those who stick to serious or even obstinate bourgeois ideas and a bourgeois style in work.

In the second place, these comrades lack revolutionary vigilance, shutting their eyes to the wrecking activities of counter-revolutionaries and other bad elements among the intelligentsia, and are not disposed to resolutely weed them out. In short, this tendency of undue compromise and lack of political vigilance, instead of guiding intellectuals along the road of progress, tends to shield their backwardness; instead of making a sharp distinction between friend and foe and checking counter-revolutionary activities, it tends to wipe out the line strictly drawn between revolution and counter-revolution.

This tendency of undue compromise and lack of political vigilance is an instance of unconcealed Rightist conservatism. Sectarianism manifests itself as "Leftist" in some ways. So far as it fails to see the Party's influence on intellectuals, the progress made by the latter, and the necessity and possibilities of vigorously speeding up the

development of science and culture, it is still essentially a manifestation of Rightist conservatism characterized by recognition falling behind reality and complacency in backwardness. Both the tendency of sectarianism and the tendency of undue compromise and lack of political vigilance are detrimental to the cause of socialist construction, and so must be resolutely set right.

III

In order to turn to full account the abilities of our present intellectual force, we must pay attention to three things. First, to provide them with suitable jobs and look after their material welfare; secondly, to keep on remoulding them through practice and theoretical study; and thirdly, to weed out counter-revolutionaries hidden among them so as to purify their ranks.

A. The following measures should be taken in regard to providing for their work and living conditions.

(1) To improve the way of employing intellectuals so that they can make good use of their special skills for the benefit of the country. At present, the great majority of them have proper jobs, but there are still some whose work has not been suitably arranged. For instance, some are not doing what they have learnt or what they know best; others are too frequently transferred; still others find they have far too little work to do, etc. Then, owing to bureaucratism and departmentalism of the organizations concerned, it often happens that such cases are not put right in time. Besides, a very small number of intellectuals have not yet been given work. We should quickly find a solution to all these problems.

(2) To put proper trust in and give the necessary support to all intellectuals who are patriotic and faith-

ful to their duty, so that they can work with greater enthusiasm. As to those who are politically questionable because of their past activities, we should draw correct conclusions of their cases as soon as possible, in order to set their minds at rest.

(3) To provide the intellectuals with necessary working conditions and give them proper treatment.

(a) To ensure the intellectuals enough time for their vocational work. Many intellectuals are called upon to attend far too many meetings and to shoulder far too much administrative responsibility. A small number of them hold too many concurrent posts and take part in too many social activities. The result is that they are overburdened with work and their efficiency falls. The various departments concerned must lay down reasonable and strict regulations to reduce the number and shorten the time of meetings, simplify administrative procedures, and make readjustments as regards the intellectuals' concurrent posts and social activities. They must see to it that the intellectuals can be sure of at least five-sixths of the working days, i.e., 40 hours each week, to carry on their vocational work. As to those experts who at the same time have to take up administrative work, we must make proper arrangements in each case, so that they will still have the time needed to devote themselves to their special fields.

(b) To facilitate the intellectuals' work in their special fields, we must provide them with reference material, books, laboratory apparatuses and equipment, assistants, etc. according to their needs.

(c) The remuneration for intellectuals, especially the higher intellectuals, must be suitably raised on the principle of "pay according to work." The administrative departments and trade union organizations must take active measures to improve the housing and other living conditions of those intellectuals who have difficulties in this regard. Special consideration should be

given to those experts who are far advanced in age and physically weak. The present tendency of equalitarianism in providing material facilities and the erroneous tendency of mechanically treating people according to rank, attaching importance to people in administrative posts and not to experts, must be resolutely overcome.

(d) The system of grading and promoting engineers and technical personnel must be quickly improved, the system of inaugurating degrees and conferring academic and honorary titles must be established, the system of rewarding people for their inventions, discoveries and innovations, for scientific works, for creations in art and literature must be improved, so as to bring about a general development in science and culture.

(e) The political treatment of intellectuals, which, in certain respects, is somewhat unreasonable, should also be quickly improved.

B. To continue helping intellectuals to advance through practice, theoretical study and ideological criticism, so as to reduce the number of backward elements to a minimum, to turn as far as possible the intermediate section into progressives, and to enable the progressives to become intellectuals who are devoted heart and soul to socialism.

(1) Concerning practice:

(a) Many intellectuals who found no scope for their talents under reactionary rule in the past have since liberation got ample opportunity to make full use of their abilities to serve their motherland and the people. In practical work, they have been able to identify themselves with workers, peasants and the broad masses of the young people, and thereby have come to realize the connection between their work and the cause of socialism. At the same time, the benefit received from advanced Soviet experience has also done much to help them make progress both in work and in their way of thinking. Therefore, in practical work, the Party should be adept

in leading intellectuals through their own special fields towards accepting communism or coming closer to it.

(b) In the last year or two, intellectuals visiting or doing a spell of work in factories and villages have had a chance of seeing a tremendous and rapid development of our construction work in various fields. This has greatly enhanced their patriotic feeling and enthusiasm for socialism. In the future we should arrange such matters in a well-planned way so that those intellectuals — regardless of whether they are progressives, or are in the intermediate or backward sections — who had not been on such visits before to factories and the countryside may now have a chance of doing so.

(2) Concerning theoretical study and ideological criticism:

(a) Most intellectuals now realize the importance of studying Marxism-Leninism. To help them study Marxism-Leninism, we should initiate certain required basic courses. But this must be done on a voluntary principle and with due regard to the actual needs, different working conditions and reading ability of the intellectuals. Such methods as self-study, night school, correspondence school, academic seminars, etc. should be given due emphasis. Mechanically applying methods unsuited to their conditions and peculiarities should be avoided.

(b) Criticism of bourgeois idealist theories carried out in the academic field can do much to help intellectuals learn Marxism-Leninism and free themselves from bourgeois influence. For more than a year the struggle against idealism on our ideological front has greatly developed and has produced remarkable results. The Party should keep on drawing intellectuals into the struggle and extend the scope of propaganda on materialism so that the majority of them will truly embrace materialism.

(c) Whether in their vocational work, theoretical study or ideological criticism, the method of self-

education among intellectuals must be stressed. It is permissible to criticize or try to persuade them, but forcible measures or a high-handed way of dictating to them are impermissible. Ideological criticism is necessary and unavoidable, but the methods used must be well thought out, flexible and at once moderate and gradual. In discussing academic subjects, free debate in a matter-of-fact spirit should be encouraged. Dogmatism, monopoly by the few (whether Party members or people outside the Party), and abuse of administrative power to solve problems should be opposed.

(3) In order to help intellectuals to advance, it is necessary for Party leaders and Party workers to have direct and comradely contact with them. The Party must lend a willing ear to their opinions, point out their achievements and shortcomings, help them conduct criticism and self-criticism, and, when the occasion requires, invite certain non-Party intellectuals to take part in meetings of Party organizations. Democratic parties and groups, the Youth League and trade union organizations have also an important role to play in helping intellectuals to make strides forward, and the Party must give active guidance to their work in this respect.

C. We must continue with our work of remoulding intellectuals and raise their political understanding, while at the same time we must weed out all counter-revolutionaries hidden among intellectuals to purify their ranks.

(1) Strive to weed out in the main counter-revolutionaries hidden among intellectuals within two years.

(2) In the struggle to weed out counter-revolutionaries, attention must be paid to the following:

(a) The movement for the suppression of counter-revolutionaries in 1951 and the struggle against all hidden counter-revolutionaries which first began with the struggle against the Hu Feng counter-revolutionary

clique[1] in 1955 have done much to educate the intellectuals and drawn a great number of them (including a part of the backward elements) into the struggle. From now on we must keep on uniting the broad masses of intellectuals in this struggle and heighten their political consciousness so that they will know best how to draw a strict line between friend and foe.

(b) In combating counter-revolutionaries, the line must be drawn between counter-revolutionaries and those intellectuals who have only ordinary social contact, and not political connections, with counter-revolutionaries; the latter we should not suspect without good grounds. As to intellectuals who were associated with counter-revolutionary organizations in the past but have had no contact with them since liberation, once they have made a clean breast of their past and behave well thereafter, we should treat them no worse than ordinary citizens.

In the case of accidents in production, a distinction should be made between negligence and sabotage, and a technical investigation to find out the cause must be undertaken.

Special consideration and aid should be given to well-known intellectuals who are genuinely learned and have special abilities. If any of them is found guilty or is suspected of present counter-revolutionary activities which need to be cleared up, his case should be reported to the Central Committee in accordance with its directive issued on January 16, 1956 and then, subject to its approval, referred to the departments concerned to be dealt with. No mass meeting should be called to wage a struggle against him.

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[1]Hu Feng is a counter-revolutionary who, for more than 20 years disguising himself as a Marxist-Leninist writer, carried on subversive activities in the realm of progressive literature in China. In 1955, the criminal activities of Hu Feng and his clique were exposed.—*Translator.*

(c) As to intellectuals guilty of present counter-revolutionary activities, they must be dealt with according to the seriousness of their crimes and the way they have made a clean breast of their past. Those who have only committed minor crimes and made quite a clean breast of their crimes, or have rendered good services to make amends, should be given proper work. Subject to the approval of the departments concerned, convicted counter-revolutionaries who really have special abilities may be employed, under surveillance, as a measure of reforming them through work.

(d) Those intellectuals who only have erroneous or reactionary ideas but have not been engaged in counter-revolutionary activities should on no account be treated as counter-revolutionaries. They should be given a chance to continue to work for the people. The policy towards them is serious criticism and patient education so that, given ample time, they may gradually realize their mistakes and rectify them through work.

IV

Only by energetically bringing up fresh forces and raising the professional levels of intellectuals can we thoroughly solve the question of intellectuals in our country. Importance must be attached to this task when the central and local departments draw up their fifteen-year prospective plans, their second five-year plans, and their annual plans for 1956 and 1957.

A. In accordance with the policy of the Central Committee to ensure that those branches of science most urgently needed by our country will approach the most advanced levels of the world within 12 years, the State Planning Commission should work out with all the departments concerned a comprehensive plan regarding the

number and quality of experts to be trained by those departments—chiefly the industrial departments and scientific research institutes.

(1) In drawing up this comprehensive plan, an appropriate ratio should be kept between the needs of fundamental theoretical study and those of applied science. In deciding on the quotas, the tendency to stress the needs of theoretical study or, conversely, the needs of applied science at the expense of the other is harmful. Hence, this plan must provide for the following:

(a) To train a sufficient number of experts capable of solving independently the technical problems that arise in our modernized industry, agriculture, communications and transport, national defence, public health services and other branches. Without a great number of experts mastering modern techniques, it will be impossible for us to fulfil the task of carrying out technical reconstruction in our entire national economy.

(b) To promote at the same time basic theoretical study in the natural sciences and train a definite number of physicists, chemists, mathematicians, biologists and other scholars of theoretical science, who approach modern advanced levels. This will lead to science in our country making important advances, a step which should never be overlooked.

(c) To train a number of experts in the fields of education, art and literature capable of meeting the needs of the country and the people.

(d) To vigorously train experts in various branches of social science and philosophy.

(2) In drawing up this plan, we must pay special attention to bridging the "gaps" in our scientific studies — branches of science which are virtually non-existent or extremely weak but are urgently needed by our country. We must also further raise the level of those branches of science which already have a fairly good

foundation, and help them make outstanding and significant contributions.

B. In order to realize the above-mentioned plan, the following measures should be taken:

(1) To strengthen personnel:

(a) To transfer immediately a number of the eminently qualified from among higher intellectuals and college graduates who have been assigned other work to do scientific research, and to transfer immediately to scientific research institutes a number of Party cadres who have some knowledge of science.

(b) To take active measures to train and promote new experts, and establish a comprehensive system for the training and promoting of new experts.

(c) To pay attention to providing opportunities for outstanding cadres at administrative posts, fine middle-ranking intellectuals and excellent active workers to pursue further studies. To build up a close co-operation between new and old experts, and between new and old intellectuals. To vigorously organize young intellectuals to learn from the old experts, and old experts to teach the young intellectuals.

(d) To enlarge the enrolment of institutions of higher learning, and expand the reserve force in science and technology according to plan.

(2) To strengthen the institutions of scientific research:

(a) To strengthen the Chinese Academy of Sciences so that it may truly become the centre for leading scientific research work in the country.

(b) All institutions of higher learning must, under the guidance of the national plan for the development of the sciences, strengthen their own scientific research bodies so that they may separately become important bases for the development of scientific research and for the training of new recruits for scientific and technological work.

(c) Government departments must also take active steps to establish and strengthen their own scientific research organizations.

(d) Among research bodies in various institutions of higher learning, economic departments and large industrial enterprises as well as in the fields of culture and public health, we must foster one or several units of the highest level so that these may each in their particular field play a leading and piloting role in raising the scientific, technological and cultural level of the whole nation.

(e) The services of libraries, museums and archives must be correspondingly developed, and the manufacture of apparatuses and other services necessary for scientific research expanded.

(3) To strengthen the organizational work for learning from the Soviet Union and other countries:

To continue to learn from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies with great effort and apply their advanced experiences to the conditions in China in a creative way — this is a most important measure to speed up the progress of science and technology in our country.

(a) According to our most urgent needs in science, to select and send to the Soviet Union and other countries groups of experts, eminent scientific workers and outstanding university and college graduates to do apprentice work or study as post-graduates for a suitable period of time. After their return to China, they should immediately start work in the Chinese Academy of Sciences or government departments to help lay a foundation for the development of their respective fields of science and technology and train new cadres on a large scale. An additional number of people should be sent abroad each year, according to our needs, to do apprentice work and study.

(b) To invite groups of experts from the Soviet Union and other countries concerned to help us build up

in the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other departments concerned certain branches of science and their research within the shortest time possible and help us train new cadres or extend all-round co-operation with our scientific circles.

(c) To organize in a systematic way large groups of scientific workers and technicians to learn from the Soviet experts in China; regard them as teachers instead of ordinary working staff. In the process of construction and production in the 156 enterprises which the Soviet Union has been helping us to construct, organize systematically large groups of technicians to study and master wholesale the principles of new techniques involved and quickly pass on these to others.

(d) Quickly set up a science information service. Besides paying attention to the study of the latest achievements in science and technology of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, we should pay attention to the study of the latest achievements in science and technology of the capitalist countries and critically absorb whatever can be of use to our country.

(e) To extend the scope of the study of foreign languages, improve the work of importing foreign publications and greatly strengthen translation work. We should have the classical works and books on latest achievements in scientific and cultural fields of foreign countries translated before 1967.

(4) To sum up our own experiences:

It is an important task of scientific research to sum up systematically and timely the experiences of the Chinese people in production work and political struggles.

(a) To take note of new problems in science which arise in the course of our national construction and of our new achievements scored in science, to arouse the enthusiasm and creative spirit of Chinese scientists and technicians.

(b) To study and evaluate systematically the historical heritage of our science and culture and accept and develop its best part. To collect together a necessary force to select and render into everyday Chinese the most important ancient books of our country within the period of three five-year plans.

(5) To pay attention to the scientific work of national minorities and various localities:

(a) When we formulate our plan to train experts, raise scientific and cultural levels and study and evaluate our cultural heritage, attention must be paid to the needs of the national minorities.

(b) When the local authorities draw up plans, special attention should be paid to the training of middle-ranking intellectuals and to the development of scientific research in the localities.

V

The key to a correct solution of the question of intellectuals is to strengthen the leadership of the Party over the intellectuals and in our work among them. A handful of people inside and outside the Party hold that our Party is unable to give leadership to the work of science and culture. They are entirely in the wrong and the view they hold must be refuted. As a matter of fact, our Party has since liberation guided the development of science and culture throughout the country and scored tremendous achievements. What the majority of intellectuals outside the Party urgently demand of our Party today is to give them still more active leadership.

The leadership the Party gave to the work of science and culture in the past has in general been confined to putting forward ideological and political principles, setting forth policies and tasks, the disposition of forces and the readjustment of relations, while comparatively little

has been done in giving concrete direction to, checking and helping the actual professional work.

It should be admitted that the Party's resources are rather weak in this respect, and it is high time to strengthen them. In order to give stronger leadership to the work of science and culture, the entire Party should respond to Comrade Mao Tse-tung's call to make a great effort to study science. It is particularly necessary for leading Party members in charge of economic and cultural work and all Party members and members of the Youth League directly engaged in scientific, technical and cultural work to fully display a persevering communist spirit in acquiring scientific knowledge painstakingly, in order to become experts in their special fields within the shortest time possible. Our Party must foster and turn out a great number of Party experts. These Party experts should unite with experts outside the Party, who are loyal to the country and their profession, to form the leading core of our intelligentsia.

To improve our leadership over the work of science and culture, the Party must constantly inspect the work of all organizations where intellectuals are employed, see that they rectify their defects in time, and exchange experiences with others. We should teach Party members in these organizations to appreciate knowledge and the importance of intellectuals and to carry out work among them in a correct manner. It is necessary at the same time to transfer a number of cadres who are politically experienced, fairly educated, and willing to make a thorough study of their profession to strengthen these units. Those who are entirely incompetent should be replaced.

Concerning the question of drawing intellectuals, and especially higher intellectuals, into the Party, there has been a serious tendency of sectarianism in the past. This must be thoroughly overcome. The Organization Department of the Central Committee should in accordance

with the provisions of the Party's Constitution work out a plan for drawing intellectuals into the Party and issue it to lower Party organizations after it has been approved by the Central Committee. By 1962 the number of Party members who are higher intellectuals should make up about one-third of the higher intellectuals.

In order to solve in a unified manner many problems of an administrative nature relating to higher intellectuals, it has been decided to set up a Bureau of Experts Affairs under the State Council. Similar offices may be set up, if necessary, in the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. However, the various departments and organizations concerned must not on this account relax their responsibility in dealing with the question of intellectuals.

The Propaganda Department of the Central Committee and the propaganda departments of the Party committees at all levels should be responsible in supervising and checking the handling of questions concerning intellectuals by the government departments concerned, and see to it that this Directive is thoroughly carried out. They should send their questions and put forward proposals in time to the Central Committee and the Party committees concerned.

All the departments and commissions of the Central Committee, the leading Party members' groups in government departments, the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army, and Party committees of provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions should be responsible for relaying this Directive to all Party members, examine their own work and put forward proposals to improve their work in accordance with this Directive, and report in time to the Central Committee of the Party.

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